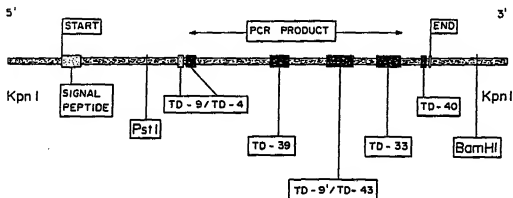


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(54) Title: HEPARINASE GENE FROM *FLAVOBACTERIUM HEPARINUM*

(57) Abstract

The cloning of the heparinase gene from *Flavobacterium Heparinum* using the polymerase chain reaction is described. The Open Reading Frame (ORF) corresponded to 1152 base pairs encoding a precursor protein of MW 43,800 daltons. The amino acid sequence reveals a 20-residue leader peptide. The gene was expressed in two expression systems in *E. Coli*.

HEPARINASE GENE FROM FLAVOBACTERIUM HEPARINUM

Background of the Invention

This invention is generally in the area of heparinases and is specifically directed to the gene encoding heparinase I, expressed in *Flavobacterium heparinum*.

The United States government has rights in this invention by virtue of grant number 25810 from the National Institutes of Health.

Heparin is an anticoagulant that activates serine protease inhibitors (serpins), which play a key role in the blood clotting cascade, as described by Damus et al., *Nature* 246:355-357 (1973). According to Lindahl et al., *Trends Biochem. Sci.* 11:221-225 (1986), heparin is the most acidic natural polymer known to date. It consists of a major 1,4-linked disaccharide repeating unit of D-uronic acid 1,4- β -D-glucosamine, and has an average of four negative charges (three sulfate groups and one carboxylate group) per monosaccharide unit. Heparin is both polydisperse, having an average molecular weight between 3,000 and 45,000 daltons, and heterogenous due to partial epimerization of D-glucuronic acid to L-iduronic acid and incomplete N- and O- sulfation, as reported by Kusche et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.*, 77:6551-6555 (1980) and Comper, *Polymer Monograph* 7, 1981.

In addition, proteoglycans like heparin have a wide range of biological influences, including in blood chemistry, growth factor interaction and wound healing, interaction with basic structural proteins in the extracellular matrix and in cellular mediated immune responses. The basic nature of protein/peptide heparin/complex carbohydrate interaction is important. Although heparin seems fairly heterogenous, it is now quite clear that different heparin fractions exhibit distinct and unique properties indicating some

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compositional and possibly structural specificity for its biological role, as reviewed by Cardin, A. D. and H. J. R. Weintraub, *Arteriosclerosis* 9, 21-32 (1989).

Heparinase, also referred to as heparin lyase, is the only known enzyme capable of degrading heparin that has been extensively characterized. It has been designated EC 4.2.2.7 by the Enzyme Commission. According to Galliher, et al., *Eur. J. Appl. Microbiol.* 15:252 (1982), the enzyme is a polysaccharide lyase found in the periplasmic space of *Flavobacterium heparinum*, a Gram-negative soil isolate. *F. heparinum* utilizes heparin as its sole source of carbon and nitrogen, as described by Hoving and Linker, *J. Biol. Chem.* 245:6170 (1970). Heparinase is the initial enzyme of heparin catabolism. Although constitutively expressed in low amounts, Galliher, et al., *App. Environ. Microbiol.* 41:360 (1981), have discovered that enzyme expression is induced by heparin and reversibly repressed by sulfate in the medium. Lindhardt, et al., *Appl. Biochem. Biotechnol.* 9:41 (1984), have shown that heparinase is inhibited by other polyanionic polysaccharides.

Heparinase has been purified by standard chromatographic techniques and its enzymatic properties characterized extensively, as described by scientists including Yang, et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 260:1849 (1985). The enzyme is a 44,000 dalton monomeric protein with a pI of approximately 9.

Heparinase acts as an eliminase, leaving behind an unsaturated double bond at the non-reducing end group. This double bond is exploited in an assay for heparinase activity by the absorbance of the unsaturated product at 232 nm. The enzyme is marginally tolerant to salts and is very specific for heparin, having a K_m of 30 nM. Heparinase has an

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activation energy of 4.5 kcal/mol, a k_m of 8×10^{-6} and a V_{max} of 4×10^{-7} M/min.

Heparin is often used in surgery to prevent blood clotting and to increase the compatibility of extracorporeal devices such as heart-lung and kidney dialysis machines. The enzymatic degradation of heparin by heparinase is sufficient to eliminate the anticoagulation properties of heparin in surgery. As described by Langer, et al. in *Biomaterials: Inter-facial Phenomenon and Applications*, Adv. in Chem. Symposium Series, Chap. 13, pp. 493-509 (1982), this property has led to the use of heparinase as an immobilized bioreactor in conjunction with heart-lung or kidney dialysis machines to deheparinize blood. Commercial application of the heparinase bioreactor is pending clinical trials.

A principal problem in the use of the heparinase bioreactor is the availability of sufficient amounts of pure heparinase to be immobilized onto a surface. This is primarily because the amount of heparinase constitutively expressed in *F. heparinum* is very low. Inducing expression of heparinase in *F. heparinum* with heparin is very expensive due to the amounts of heparin needed and the size of the fermentation to produce reasonable amounts of heparinase for any practical applications.

Cloning and expression of the heparinase gene is important in several ways. First, the only enzyme cloned and characterized to date which acts to depolymerise proteoglycans is heparinase. Second, heparin is the only anticoagulant commonly used in surgery so deheparinizing blood is an important medical problem. Moreover, heparinase catalyzed degradation of heparin into lower molecular weight heparin molecules can be used to yield products with specific anticoagulant activity, as discussed by

Rosenfeld and Danishefsky, *Biochem. J.* 237:639-646 (1986).

Designing recombinant heparinases with altered activitie(s) would be interesting academically, as well as commercially. For example, heparinase can be used to deheparinize blood because the enzyme cleaves right at the AT-III binding oligomer. On the other hand, by further understanding the mechanism of the enzyme binding and depolymerizing heparin, recombinant heparinases with altered specificity could be designed, i.e. an AT-III binding heparin fragment not cleaved by the recombinant enzyme. This would be a very useful way of generating an AT-III binding heparin oligosaccharide, which currently is not available in large amounts, for use as an anticoagulant. Producing heparinases which could help and or improve in the enzyme purification or immobilization would also be quite valuable. For example, a tag (a particular peptide sequence) could be added at a region which does not alter the activity of the enzyme but makes the immobilization chemistry very efficient. This would help in improving enzyme loading onto the immobilization matrix.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide the gene encoding heparinase and a system for expression to facilitate the production of large amounts of heparinase.

It is another object of the present invention to provide methods and means for modifying the gene to produce recombinant heparinases having altered specificity and other desirable properties.

It is another object of the present invention to provide pure heparinase for use in the area of cytokine-proteoglycan interactions, as a tool or diagnostic as exemplified by fibroblast growth factor - heparin interactions.

Summary of the Invention

The cloning of the heparinase gene from *Flavobacterium Heparinum* using the polymerase chain reaction is described. Two degenerate oligonucleotides, based on amino acid sequence derived from tryptic peptides of purified heparinase were used in the PCR with *Flavobacterium* genomic DNA as the template to generate a 600 base pairs probe. This probe was used to screen a pUC 18 *Flavobacterium* genomic library. The Open Reading Frame (ORF) corresponded to 1152 base pairs encoding a precursor protein of MW 43,800 daltons. Eleven different tryptic peptides (approximately 48% of the total amino acids) mapped into the ORF. The amino acid sequence reveals a 20-residue leader peptide.

Heparinase can be expressed from the gene. Additionally, the gene can be modified to produce heparinase with altered enzymatic activity, specificity, or binding properties. The sequence can also be used as a probe in the isolation of genes encoding other related enzymes.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a schematic representation of the PCR products Y1:C and D:C which are 600 and 160 basepairs, respectively. The 600 basepair PCR product was used as a template with D and C as primers to generate the 160 basepair D:C product.

Figure 2 is the restriction map of the genomic DNA pUC 18 plasmid, pRS.HEP51, having an insert containing the heparinase gene. The plasmid is 5631 bases long and has approximately 2300 bases of insert. The heparinase gene is in the *Kpn I*-*Kpn I* fragment.

Figure 3 is a *Kpn I*-*Kpn I* fragment map showing the heparinase gene structure with the different tryptic peptides mapping into the open reading frame. Six

different peptides mapped into the heparinase gene translation region.

Detailed Description of the Invention

The gene encoding heparinase in *F. heparinum* has been cloned. The nucleotide and amino acid sequences are shown below:

The following sequence (Sequence No. 1, base pairs 1 to 172, inclusive) encodes a leader peptide:
CCTTT TGGGA GCAAA GGCAG AACCA TCTCC GAACA AAGGC AGAAC
CAGCC TGTAACACAGA CAGCA ATTCA TCCGC TTTCACCAA AGTGA
AAGCA TTAA TACAA TACCA GAATG TCGCA TTTC CTTC AGCGT
ACTTT TTGGG TAAAT AACCA ATAAA AACTA AAGAC GG

The following sequence (Sequence No. 1, base pairs 173 to 1379, inclusive) encodes the heparinase:
ATG AAA AAA CAA ATT CTA TAT CTG ATT GTA CTT CAG CAA
CTG TTC CTC TGT TCG GCT TAC GCC CAG CAA AAA AAA TCC
GGT AAC ATC CCT TAC CGG GTA AAT GTG CAG GCC GAC AGT
GCT AAG CAG AAG GCG ATT ATT GAC AAC AAA TGG GTG GCA
GTA GGC ATC AAT AAA CCT TAT GCA TTA CAA TAT GAC GAT
AAA CTG CGC TTT AAT GGA AAA CCA TCC TAT CGC TTT GAG
CTT AAA GCC GAA GAC AAT TCG CTT GAA GGT TAT GCT GCA
GGA GAA ACA AAG GGC CGT ACA GAA TTG TCG TAC AGC TAT
GCA ACC ACC AAT GAT TTT AAG AAA TTT CCC CCA AGC GTA
TAC CAA AAT GCG CAA AAG CTA AAA ACC GTT TAT CAT TAC
GGC AAA GGG ATT TGT GAA CAG GGG AGC TCC CGC AGC TAT
ACC TTT TCA GTG TAC ATA CCC TCC TTC CCC GAC AAT
GCG ACT ACT ATT TTT GCC CAA TGG CAT GGT GCA CCC AGC
AGA ACG CTT GTA GCT ACA CCA GAG GGA GAA ATT AAA ACA
CTG AGC ATA GAA GAG TTT TTG GCC TTA TAC GAC CGC ATG
ATC TTC AAA AAA AAT ATC GCC CAT GAT AAA GTT GAA AAA
AAA GAT AAG GAC GGA AAA ATT ACT TAT GTA GCC GGA AAG
CCA AAT GGC TGG AAG GTA GAA CAA GGT GGT TAT CCC ACG
CTG GCC TTT GGT TTT TCT AAA GGG TAT TTT TAC ATC AAG
GCA AAC TCC GAC CGG CAG TGG CTT ACC GAC AAA GCC GAC
CGT AAC AAT GCC AAT CCC GAG AAT AGT GAA GTA ATG AAG
CCC TAT TCC TCG GAA TAC AAA ACT TCA ACC ATT GCC TAT

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AAA ATG CCC TTT GCC CAG TTC CCT AAA GAT TGC TGG ATT
ACT TTT GAT GTC GCC ATA GAC TGG ACG AAA TAT GGA AAA
GAG GCC AAT ACA ATT TTG AAA CCC GGT AAG CTG GAT GTG
ATG ATG ACT TAT ACC AAG AAT AAG AAA CCA CAA AAA GCG
CAT ATC GTA AAC CAG CAG GAA ATC CTG ATC GGA CGT AAC
GAT GAC GAT GGC TAT TAC TTC AAA TTT GGA ATT TAC AGG
GTC GGT AAC AGC ACG GTC CCG GTT ACT TAT AAC CTG AGC
GGG TAC AGC GAA ACT GCC AGA TAG (stop codon)

The following is the amino acid sequence (Sequence No.
2) of heparinase:

Met Lys Lys Gln Ile Leu Tyr Leu Ile Val Leu Gln Gln
Leu Phe Leu Cys Ser Ala Tyr Ala Gln Gln Lys Lys Ser
Gly Asn Ile Pro Tyr Arg Val Asn Val Gln Ala Asp Ser
Ala Lys Gln Lys Ala Ile Ile Asp Asn Lys Trp Val Ala
Val Gly Ile Asn Lys Pro Tyr Ala Leu Gln Tyr Asp Asp
Lys Leu Arg Phe Asn Gly Lys Pro Ser Tyr Arg Phe Glu
Leu Lys Ala Glu Asp Asn Ser Leu Glu Gly Tyr Ala Ala
Gly Glu Thr Lys Gly Arg Thr Glu Leu Ser Tyr Ser Tyr
Ala Thr Thr Asn Asp Phe Lys Lys Phe Pro Pro Ser Val
Tyr Gln Asn Ala Gln Lys Leu Lys Thr Val Tyr His Tyr
Gly Lys Gly Ile Cys Glu Gln Gly Ser Ser Arg Ser Tyr
Thr Phe Ser Val Tyr Ile Pro Ser Ser Phe Pro Asp Asn
Ala Thr Thr Ile Phe Ala Gln Trp His Gly Ala Pro Ser
Arg Thr Leu Val Ala Thr Pro Glu Gly Glu Ile Lys Thr
Leu Ser Ile Glu Glu Phe Leu Ala Leu Tyr Asp Arg Met
Ile Phe Lys Lys Asn Ile Ala His Asp Lys Val Glu Lys
Lys Asp Lys Asp Gly Lys Ile Thr Tyr Val Ala Gly Lys
Pro Asn Gly Trp Lys Val Glu Gln Gly Gly Tyr Pro Thr
Leu Ala Phe Gly Phe Ser Lys Gly Tyr Phe Tyr Ile Lys
Ala Asn Ser Asp Arg Gln Trp Leu Thr Asp Lys Ala Asp
Arg Asn Asn Ala Asn Pro Glu Asn Ser Glu Val Met Lys
Pro Tyr Ser Ser Glu Tyr Lys Thr Ser Thr Ile Ala Tyr
Lys Met Pro Phe Ala Gln Phe Pro Lys Asp Cys Trp Ile
Thr Phe Asp Val Ala Ile Asp Trp Thr Lys Tyr Gly Lys
Glu Ala Asn Thr Ile Leu Lys Pro Gly Lys Leu Asp Val
Met Met Thr Tyr Thr Lys Asn Lys Lys Pro Gln Lys Ala

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His Ile Val Asn Gln Gln Glu Ile Leu Ile Gly Arg Asn
Asp Asp Asp Gly Tyr Tyr Phe Lys Phe Gly Ile Tyr Arg
Val Gly Asn Ser Thr Val Pro Val Thr Tyr Asn Leu Ser
Gly Tyr Ser Glu Thr Ala Arg.

**Example 1: Isolation and analysis of CDNA
encoding heparinase in *F. heparinum*.**

Because preliminary cloning attempts by others utilizing 1) antibody screening, 2) screening for functionally active heparinase in *E.coli* and 3) screening for the heparinase gene using probes derived from protein sequences regenerated by cyanogen bromine (CNBr) chemical digest were unsuccessful, the polymerase chain reaction was used to clone the heparinase gene. The reverse phase purified heparinase was reduced, alkylated and digested with trypsin to obtain approximately 60 peptide peaks which were separated and collected by reverse phase HPLC monitored at 210 nm and at 277 nm (for tyrosine and tryptophan), as described below.

Tryptic Digest and Protein Sequence Analyses

Heparinase was purified as described by Dietrich, et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 248:6408 (1973), Otatani et al., *Carbohydr. Res.* 88:291 (1981), and Yang et al., *J. Biol. Chem.* 260:1849 (1985), which are incorporated by reference herein. A final purification step was carried out by High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) using a reverse phase column that exploits the hydrophobic residues of the protein. A nanomole (approximately 45 µg) of the purified enzyme was denatured in 50 µl of an 8 M urea, 0.4 M ammonium carbonate solution, reduced with 5 mM dithiothreitol (DTT) at 50°C, cooled to room temperature, and alkylated with 10 mM iodoacetamide for 15 minutes in the dark. The total reaction volume was 200 µl. To this reaction mixture, 1/25th w/w of trypsin was added and digestion carried out at 37°C

for 24 hour. The reaction was terminated by heating the sample at 65°C for 2 minutes. The digest was separated by reverse phase HPLC using a gradient of 0 to 80% acetonitrile. The tryptic peptides were monitored at 210 and 277 nm.

The tryptic peaks were collected in Eppendorff tubes. Based on the homogeneity of the peptide peak, eight different peaks were sequenced using an Applied Biosystems sequencer, model 477, with an on-line model 120 PTH amino acid analyzer located in the Biopolymers lab, Center for Cancer Research, MIT. The sequences are set forth in Table I below. The designation (K,R) is used in Table I to indicate that trypsin cuts at either lysine or arginine residues. The asterisks in Table I represent amino acids that could not be determined. The peptide designated td Lx is the longest peptide sequenced having 38 residues. Native heparinase was also sequenced to determine the N-terminus amino acids.

Table I: Sequences of Tryptic Peptides of Heparinase

<u>Peptide</u>	<u>Amino Acid Sequence</u>
td 04	(K, R) G I C E Q G S S R
td 09	(K, R) T V Y H Y G K
td 09'	(K, R) T S T I A Y K
td 21	(K, R) F G I Y R
td 33	(K, R) A D I V N Q Q E I L I G R D D * G Y Y F K
td 39	(K, R) I T Y V A G K P N G N K V E Q G G Y P T L A F *
td 43	(K, R) M P F A Q F P K D C W I T F D V A I D * T K
td 40	(K, R) N L S G Y S E T A R
tdm4	K N I A H D K V E K K
td 72	K T L S I E E F L A L Y D R
td Lx	R S Y T F S V Y I P S S F P D N A T T I F A W H G A P S R T L V T P E I K

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Three sets of primers were designed and synthesized, as shown in Table II. Primers were synthesized with an Applied Biosystems sequencer, model 477, with an on-line model 120 PTH amino acid analyzer located in the Biopolymers lab, Center for Cancer Research, MIT. These primer sets were used in the PCR amplification system for cloning the heparinase gene. The symbol "I" represents the nucleotide inosine. The amino acids of each peptide, depicted in boldface type, represent the residues chosen for the primer design. Two different sets of primers were constructed for tryptic peptide 33 to reduce the degree of inosine substitution at the 3' end of the primer.

Table II: Heparinase Primer Design

Peptide: td 04

Amino Acid Sequence:

K G I C E Q G S S R

primers:

Y1 5'- AAA GGI AT(T/C/A) TG(T/C) GA(A/G)
CA(A/G) GG -3'

Y2 5'- CC (C/T)TG (C/T)TC (G/A)CA (T/G/A)AT
ICC TTT -3'

Peptide: td 43

Amino Acid Sequence:

(K, R) M P F A Q F P K D E W I T F C V
A I D * T K

primers:

D 5'- ATG CCI TT(T/C) GCI CA(A/G) TT(T/C) CCI
AA(A/G) GA(T/C) GA -3'

E 3'- TAC GGI AA(A/G) CGI GT(T/C) AA(A/G) GGI
TT(T/C) CT(A/G) CT -5'

Peptide: td 33

Amino Acid Sequence:

(K, R) A D I V N Q Q E I L I G R D D * G Y Y F K A

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primers:

- A 5'- ATI AA(T/C) CA(A/G) GA(A/G)ATI (C/T)TI
AT(T/C/A) GG -3'
- B 5'- CCIATIA(G/A) IAT (T/C)TC (T/C)TG (T/C)TG
(A/G)TT ICA (A/C)AT
- C 5'- CCIATIA(G/A) IAT (T/C)TC (T/CTG (T/C)TG
(A/G)TT ICA (T/G)AT -31

Of the six RHPLC peaks initially sequenced (Table I), three were chosen for primer design. Three sets of primers were designed (Table II). The PCR product of the combination the primers td43 and td33 was about 150 base pairs in length. The combination of td4 and td33 primers were about 600 base pairs. Primer td43 was 5' to primer td33 and primer td4 was 5' to td43 primer. Using the PCR product of td4 and td33 as a template and td43 and td4 as primers the predicted 150 base pair product was obtained confirming that td43 was between td4 and td33.

The 600 basepair product shown in Figure 1 represents about 51% of the approximated total 1170 base pairs for the heparinase gene, assuming 43,000 dalton for heparinase and a 110 dalton average amino acid with a molecular weight corresponding to about 390 amino acids times three which is 1170 bases.

The 600 base pair probe was chosen for screening a pUC 18 library by high stringency colony hybridization. Two positive clones were identified which were carried through for three rounds of colony purification.

Genomic DNA, RNA, and Plasmid Library

The *F. heparinum* genomic DNA was isolated by the A.S.A.P.[™] kit (Boehringer Mannheim, Indianapolis, IN) with the following modifications. The DNA was desalted over a Sephadex[™] G-50 column (Nick column, Pharmacia, Piscataway, NJ) and concentrated using a Centricon[™] P-30 (Amicon Division, Beverly, MA) to a final volume of 100 μ l. From 1×10^9 cells, 105-115 μ g of DNA typically were obtained. Total cellular mRNA was isolated using the

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guanidine thiocyanate procedure set forth in the Promega technical information publication TB 087 12/89, Promega Corp., Madison, WI 53711. A pUC 18 plasmid was obtained from Dr. A.J. Sinskey, of the Department of Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The library was constructed using the *F. heparinum* genomic DNA. The genomic DNA was sonicated and modified by adding *EcoRI* linkers and then ligated to the pUC 18 vector. DH5a was transformed with the pUC 18 genomic library.

Amplification of the PCR Product

Amplification of the heparinase tryptic digest primers was carried out in a 25 l reaction volume containing 50 mM KCl, 10 mM Tris HCl (pH 8.3), 1.5 mM $MgCl_2$ and 0.01% gelatin plus the four deoxyribose nucleotide triphosphates (dNTPs) at 200 M, using 0.5 M primer and 3 l of the genomic DNA as the template, 2.5 units of the Taq polymerase (Cetus Corp., Emeryville, CA) and 25 l of mineral oil. The samples were placed on an automated heating block (DNA thermal cycler, Perkin Elmer Corp., Norwalk, CT) programmed for step cycles of temperatures 92°C (2 minutes), 50°C (1 minute) and 72°C (3 minutes). This cycle was repeated 35 times. The final cycle had a 72°C 10 minute extension. The PCR products were analyzed on a 0.8% agarose gel containing 0.6 µg/ml ethidium bromide. The control reaction was provided by the Cetus kit.

Screening of the *Flavobacterium heparinum* pUC 18 genomic library

The pUC 18 library was titered to give approximately 1500 colonies to be tested by the probe generated by PCR. Each plate had approximately 100 colonies which were grown directly on nitrocellulose, to an appropriate small size, and then duplicated to be grown further overnight.

The PCR probe was labelled using the Random Hexanucleotide™ kit (RHN) (IBI Biochemicals Ltd.) which is described briefly as follows. One microgram DNA from

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the PCR product run was isolated from a low melt agarose gel, denatured by boiling at 95°C for 10 minutes, and then chilled on ice. To the denatured DNA were added 10 mM dNTPs (dATP, dGTP, dCTP, dTTP), random hexanucleotides in the reaction buffer, and 50 µCi of ³²PdCTP(3000 Ci/mmol). The reaction was carried with Klenow for 30 minutes at 37°C and terminated using 0.2 M EDTA. Following the labelling reaction, the labelled probe was purified from the free nucleotide by using a Sephadex G-50 column (Nick Column, Pharmacia, Piscataway, NJ). The colonies were screened with the labelled probe using standard colony hybridization procedures as described by Maniatis et al., *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor, NY, incorporated herein by reference.

Two positive clones were isolated and the plasmids tested for their ability to generate the 600 basepair PCR product. Both of the clones tested positive and were further characterized by restriction mapping. Clone pRS Hep 51 is a 2.3 kb insert in pUC 18 (shown in Figure 2) with a *Kpn*-*Kpn* fragment of about 1.6 kb. This fragment was a positive template for generating a 600 basepair PCR product. The *Kpn*I-*Kpn*I fragment of pRS 51 was subcloned into M13 and sequenced.

DNA Sequencing

DNA sequencing was performed using phage M13 and employing the dideoxyadenosine 5'-alpha-³²S-triphosphate and Sequenase (US Biochemical Corp, Cleveland, OH) as described by the manufacturer. The sequence data was obtained using successive nested deletions in M13 using T4 DNA polymerase as per Cyclone I Biosystems (International Biotechnologies Inc., New Haven, CT) or sequenced using synthetic oligonucleotide primers.

The sequence reveals a single, continuous open reading frame (ORF) of 1152 basepairs corresponding to

384 amino acids and a leader sequence of about 21 amino acids. The PCR product spans from 566 to 1216 bases from the start site and corresponds to about 57% of the total gene.

Initially six different tryptic peptides mapped into the ORF. Subsequently, five other peptides were sequenced for structural studies and all of them mapped into the ORF, for a total of about 48% of the total 367 amino acids. There are three cysteines in all, one associated with the signal peptide. The signal peptide is typical of prokaryotic sequences, having a charged N-terminal region, a core hydrophobic region and a cleavage region with a standard Ala.xxx.Ala site for cleavage.

Example 2: Expression of the heparinase gene in *E. coli*.

Two different expression systems were selected for the expression of heparinase in *E. coli*: the Omp A expression system and the pKK hyper-expression system. The plasmid designs for both expression systems are shown in Table III.

30 Omp A expression system

The Omp A expression system secretes the protein of interest into the periplasmic space, as directed by the Omp A signal sequence, described by Ghrayeb, et al., *EMBO J.* 3:2437 (1984), incorporated herein by reference. This system was chosen since heparinase is naturally expressed into the periplasmic space of *F. heparinum*. The plasmid is under the control of the lac repressor and is induced by the addition of IPTG (isopropyl- β -D thiogalactoside) to the medium. The plasmid was inserted in the pIN-III Omp A-3 vector.

The heparinase insert was generated by PCR utilizing the N terminal and the C terminal sequences of heparinase with two appropriate restriction sites suitable for cloning into the *EcoRI*-*BamHI* sites. Two primers were constructed as shown in Table II. The insert was amplified by 5 cycles of PCR and ligated to

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the Omp A pIN vector with the *E. coli* periplasmic leader sequence. DH5 α was transformed and expression was induced with 1 mM IPTG for 3-5 hours.

As shown in Table III, the construct of the Omp A expression system results in two extra amino acids at the amino terminal of the heparinase gene, Gly and Ile. The heparinase sequence begins with a Gln.

The pKK expression system

The pKK expression system is used for over-expression of proteins in accordance with the methods of Brosius and Holy, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.*, 81: 6929 (1984) and Jaffe et al., *Biochem.* 27:1869 (1988), incorporated by reference herein. This system contains a strong *tac* promoter which, in appropriate hosts, is regulated by the *lac* repressor and induced by the addition of IPTG, as in the Omp A system. The plasmid pKK223-3 has a pUC 8 multiple cloning site and a strong *rrnB* ribosomal terminator immediately following the *tac* promoter. The ribosomal binding site of the plasmid was utilized by cloning the heparinase gene into a *Sma*I site, which is about 12 bases from the start codon ATG. Like the Omp A construction, the heparinase insert is obtained by PCR with *Sma*I and *Hind*III restriction sites at the N and the C terminals of the protein. As shown in Table III, the native heparinase leader sequence was used for over-production into the periplasm.

Periplasmic proteins of *E. coli* were isolated by osmotic shock. Briefly, 1.5 ml of cells were centrifuged after induction and washed with 10 mM Tris pH 7.5. The cells were then suspended in 20% sucrose in 10 mM Tris pH 7.5 and 5 μ l of 0.5 M EDTA. After a five minute incubation on ice, the cells were centrifuged and osmotically shocked by adding approximately 150 μ l water. The periplasmic extract was used to determine enzyme activity. Heparinase activity was determined by monitoring the wavelength at 232 nm and by the Azure A

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methods of Bernstein et al., *Methods of Immunology* 137:515 (1988), incorporated herein by reference.

The periplasmic extracts were analyzed by sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE) using the method of Laemmli, *Nature* 227:690 (1974) and stained using Coomassie blue. In addition, a Western blot assay was performed to confirm the presence of heparinase using a heparinase monoclonal antibody. Heparinase was electrophoretically transferred from the SDS-PAGE gel onto nitrocellulose using the method of Gershoni and Palade, *Analytical Biochem.* 131:1 (1983), and then incubated with the monoclonal antibody. This antibody was stained using a secondary antibody conjugated to horseradish peroxidase.

Table III: Design of OmpA and pKK plasmids for expression of Recombinant Heparinase in *E.coli*

<i>Omp A secretion Expression system</i>									
N	Gly	Ile	Gln	Lys		Thr	Ala	Arg	End
XXXX	GGA	ATT	CAG	AAA	-----	ACT	GCC	AGA	TAG
XXXX	CCT	TAA	GTC	TTT	-----	TGA	CTT	ACT	ATC
						Bam HI			
EcoRI									
<i>pKK over-Expression system</i>									
N	Met	Lys	Lys			Ala	Arg	End	
XXXX	Taa	CCC	GGG	ATG	AAA	AAA	-----	GCC	AGA
XXXX	ATT	GGC	CCC	TAC	TTT	TTT	-----	CGG	TCT
						Sma I			
						Hind III			
						TTC			
						GAA			
						GGC			
						CCG			
						XXX			

RNA Dot Blot Assay

The total cellular RNA was immobilized onto a Zeta probe™ membrane (Biorad, Richmond, CA) by alkaline RNA denaturation and fixation, and probed using the 600 base PCR product, used in screening for the heparinase gene. The hybridization was carried out with dot blot apparatus in accordance with the method of Thomas, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 77:5201 (1980). The RNA signal under different growth conditions has been investigated by Galliher, et al., *Eur. J. Appl. Microbiol.* (1982). It was established by those studies that heparinase at the protein level is optimally expressed under low sulphur conditions, which removes the requirement of heparin for induction. Heparinase mRNA signal under low sulphur growth conditions was therefore studied with and without heparin induction.

Both the OmpA and the pKK systems expressed heparinase. The OmpA system did not efficiently transport heparinase to the periplasm. For reasons not known, a large fraction of recombinant heparinase was retained in the cytoplasmic region along with the Omp A signal sequence. At lower temperatures (25°-30°C) of growth, there was some secretion into the periplasmic space.

The pKK overproduction system produced heparinase only in the periplasmic space. The pKK system used the native *F.heparinum* heparinase leader sequence in which there was no problem with the transport of the recombinant protein with a foreign leader sequence. The pKK system expressed heparinase without any aberrant processing, although the expression was again optimal at lower temperatures. The presence of heparinase in the periplasm was confirmed by western blotting and by comparing *in situ* tryptic digest of the recombinant heparinase with that of the native heparinase, in terms

of the peak profiles and some peaks which were isolated and sequenced.

A positive signal was obtained for the isolated *F. heparinum* mRNA using the 600 basepair probe derived from the PCR which has been used for isolating the heparinase gene, confirming that the gene isolated was a *F. heparinum* gene cloned in *E. coli*.

The expressed heparinase appeared to have at least some heparinase activity.

The sequence can be modified to alter specific enzymatic activity or binding specificity or affinity by substitution of one or more amino acids, using site directed mutagenesis or substitution of oligomers into the sequence encoding the heparinase. Methods and materials to accomplish this are known to those skilled in the art. The modified gene is then expressed and the product routinely screened for the altered activity.

Although described with reference to two specific expression systems, other expression systems are well known and commercially available. The heparinase gene can be expressed in these systems, using similar vectors and signal peptides or leader sequences.

Modifications and variations of the present invention will be obvious to those skilled in the art. Such modifications and variations are intended to come within the scope of the following claims.

SEQUENCE LISTING

(1) GENERAL INFORMATION:

- (i) APPLICANT: Massachusetts Institute, of Technology
(ii) TITLE OF INVENTION: The Heparinase Gene from Flavobacterium Heparinum
(iii) NUMBER OF SEQUENCES: 2

(iv) CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

- (A) ADDRESSEE: Kilpatrick & Cody
(B) STREET: 1100 Peachtree Street, Suite 2800
(C) CITY: Atlanta
(D) STATE: Georgia
(E) COUNTRY: US
(F) ZIP: 30309-4530

(v) COMPUTER READABLE FORM:

- (A) MEDIUM TYPE: Floppy disk
(B) COMPUTER: IBM PC compatible
(C) OPERATING SYSTEM: PC-DOS/MS-DOS
(D) SOFTWARE: PatentIn Release #1.0, Version #1.25

(vi) CURRENT APPLICATION DATA:

- (A) APPLICATION NUMBER:
(B) FILING DATE:
(C) CLASSIFICATION:

(vii) ATTORNEY/AGENT INFORMATION:

- (A) NAME: Fabet, Patrea L.
(B) REGISTRATION NUMBER: 31,284
(C) REFERENCE/DOCKET NUMBER: MIT5546

(1x) TELECOMMUNICATION INFORMATION:
 (A) TELEPHONE: 404-815-6508
 (B) TELEFAX: 404-815-6555

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:1:

(i) SEQUENCE CHARACTERISTICS:

(A) LENGTH: 1379 base pairs
 (B) TYPE: nucleic acid
 (C) STRANDEDNESS: single
 (D) TOPOLOGY: linear

(ii) MOLECULE TYPE: cDNA

(iii) HYPOTHETICAL: NO

(iv) ANTI-SENSE: NO

(vi) ORIGINAL SOURCE:

(A) ORGANISM: Flavobacterium heparinum

(xi) SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION: SEQ ID NO:1:

CCTTTTGGGA	GCAAAAGGAG	AACATCTCC	GAACAAAGGC	AGAACACGCC	TGTAAACAGA	60
CAGCAATTCA	TCCGCTTTCA	ACCAAAAGTGA	AAGCATTTAA	TACAATACCA	GAATGTGCGA	120
TTTCCCTTTC	AGGGTACTTT	TTGGGTAAAT	AACCAATAAA	AACTAAAGAC	GGATGAAAAA	180
ACAAATTCTA	TATCTGATTT	TACTTCAGCA	ACTGTTCTTC	TGTTGGGCTT	ACGCCACAGA	240
AAAAAATCC	GGTAACATCC	CTTACCGGGT	AAATGTGCGAG	GCCGACACAGT	CTAAGCAGAA	300
GGCGATTATT	GACAAACAAAT	GGGTGGCACT	AGGCATCAAT	AAACCTTTATG	CATTACAATA	360

TGACGATAAA CTGCGCTTTA ATGGAAGAAC ATCCTATCGC TTGAGCTTA AAGCCGAAGA 420
 CAATTGCGCTT GAAGGTTATG CTGACGGAGA AACAAAGGCG CGTACAGAAT TGTGCTACAG 480
 CTATGCAACC ACCAATGATT TTAAGAAATT TCCCCCHAGC GTATACCAAA ATGCGCAAAA 540
 GCTAAAAAACC GTTTATCAAT ACGGCAAGG GATTGTGAA CAGGGGAGCT CCGCGACGTA 600
 TACCTTTTCA GTGTACATAC CCTCTCTCTT CCGGACAAT GCGACTACTA TTTTGGCCCA 660
 ATGGCATGGT GCACCCAGCA GAACGCTTGT AGCTACACCA GAGGAGAAA TTAACAACACT 720
 GAGCATAGAA GAGTTTTTGG CCTTATACGA CCGCNTGNTC TTCAAAAAAA ATATCGCCCA 780
 TGTATAAGTT GAAAAAAG ATAGGACGG AAAATTACT TATGTAGCCG GAAGCCAAA 840
 TGGCTGGAAAG GTAGAACAAAG GTGGTTATCC CAGCTGGCC TTGGTTTTT CTAAAGGATA 900
 TTTTACATC AAGGCAAACT CGACCGGCA GTGGCTTACC GACAAAGCCG ACCGTAACAA 960
 TGCCCAATCCC GAGAAATGTG AAGTAATGAA GCCCTATTCC TCGGAATACA AAACTTCAAC 1020
 CATTGCGCTAT AAATGCCCT TTGCCCAATT CCCTAAGAT TGCTGGATTA CTTTGTATGT 1080
 CCGCATAGAC TGGACGAAT ATGGAAGA GGCATACA ATTTGAAAC CCGGTAACT 1140
 GGATGTGATG ATGACTTATA CCAAGAATAA GAACCCACAA AAGCGCAT TCGTAAACCA 1200
 GCAGGAATC CTGATCGGAC GTAAACGATGA CGATGGCTAT TACTTCAAAT TTGGAATTTA 1260
 CAGGTCGGT AACGACCG TCCCGGTTAC TTATACTTG AGCGGTACA GCGAACTGC 1320
 CAGATAGCA AAGCCCTAAG CGATCCGAT AGGCTTTTC TTATATTAC AATAAATT 1379

(2) INFORMATION FOR SEQ ID NO:2:

Arg Thr Glu Leu Ser Tyr Ser Tyr Ala Thr Thr Asn Asp Phe Lys Lys
 100 105 110
 Phe Pro Pro Ser Val Tyr Gln Asn Ala Gln Lys Leu Lys Thr Val Tyr
 115 120 125
 His Tyr Gly Lys Gly Ile Cys Glu Gln Gly Ser Ser Arg Ser Tyr Thr
 130 135 140
 Phe Ser Val Tyr Ile Pro Ser Ser Phe Pro Asp Asn Ala Thr Thr Ile
 145 150 155 160
 Phe Ala Gln Trp His Gly Ala Pro Ser Arg Thr Leu Val Ala Thr Pro
 165 170 175
 Glu Gly Glu Ile Lys Thr Leu Ser Ile Glu Glu Phe Leu Ala Leu Tyr
 180 185 190
 Asp Arg Met Ile Phe Lys Lys Asn Ile Ala His Asp Lys Val Glu Lys
 195 200 205
 Lys Asp Lys Asp Gly Lys Ile Thr Tyr Val Ala Gly Lys Pro Asn Gly
 210 215 220
 Trp Lys Val Glu Gln Gly Gly Tyr Tyr Pro Thr Leu Ala Phe Gly Phe Ser
 225 230 235 240
 Lys Gly Tyr Phe Tyr Ile Lys Ala Asn Ser Asp Arg Gln Trp Leu Thr
 245 250 255
 Asp Lys Ala Asp Arg Asn Asn Ala Asn Pro Glu Asn Ser Glu Val Met
 260 265 270
 Lys Pro Tyr Ser Ser Glu Tyr Lys Thr Ser Thr Ile Ala Tyr Lys Met
 275 280 285

Pro Phe Ala Gln Phe Pro Lys Asp Cys Trp Ile Thr Phe Asp Val Ala
 290 295
 Ile Asp Trp Thr Lys Tyr Gly Lys Glu Ala Asn Thr Ile Leu Lys Pro
 305 310 315 320
 Gly Lys Leu Asp Val Met Met Thr Tyr Thr Lys Asn Lys Lys Pro Gln
 325 330 335
 Lys Ala His Ile Val Asn Gln Gln Ile Leu Ile Gly Arg Asn Asp
 340 345 350
 Asp Asp Gly Tyr Tyr Phe Lys Phe Gly Ile Tyr Arg Val Gly Asn Ser
 355 360 365
 Thr Val Pro Val Thr Tyr Asn Leu Ser Gly Tyr Ser Glu Thr Ala Arg
 370 375 380

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We claim:

1. An isolated nucleic acid molecule isolated from *Flavobacterium heparinum* encoding heparinase I.
2. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 having the nucleotide sequence (Sequence No. 1, base pairs 173 to 1324, inclusive) consisting essentially of:

```

                                ATGAAAAA 180
ACAAATTCTA TATCTGATTG TACTTCAGCA ACTGTTCTCT TGTTGGGCTT 230
ACGCCACGCA AAAAAATCC GGTAACATCC CTACCCGGGT AAATGTGCAG 280
GCCGACAGTG CTAAGCAGAA GGCATTATT GACAACAAAT GGTGGCAGT 330
AGGCATCAAT AAACCTTATG CATTACAATA TGACGATAAA CTGCGCTTTA 380
ATGGAAAAAC ATCCTATCGC TTTGAGCTTA AAGCCGAAGA CAATTGCGTT 430
GAAGGTTATG CTGCAGGAGA AACAAAGGGC CGTACAGAAT TGTCTACAG 480
CTATGCAACC ACCAATGATT TTAAGAAATT TCCCCAAGC GTATACCAA 530
ATGCGCAAAA GCTAAAAACC GTTTATCATT ACGGCAAAGG GATTTGTGAA 580
CAGGGGAGCT CCCGCAGCTA TACCTTTTCA GTGTACATAC CCTCTCCTT 630
CCCCGACAAT GCGACTACTA TTTTGGCCA ATGGCATGGT GCACCCAGCA 680
GAACGCTTGT AGCTACACCA GAGGGAGAAA TTAAACACT GAGCATAGAA 730
GAGTTTTTGG CCTTATACGA CCGCATGATC TTCAAAAAAA ATATCGCCCA 780
TGATAAAGTT GAAAAAAG ATAAGGACGG AAAAAATTACT TATGTAGCCG 830
GAAAGCCAAA TGCGTGGAAG GTAGAACAAG GTGGTTATCC CACGCTGGCC 880
TTTGGTTTTT CTAAAGGGTA TTTTACATC AAGGCAAACT CCGACCGGCA 930
GTGGCTTACC GACAAAGCCG ACCGTAACAA TGCCAAATCCC GAGAATAGTG 980
AAGTAATGAA GCCCTATTCC TCGGAATACA AAACCTCAAC CATTGCCTAT 1030
AAATGCCCTT TTGCCAGTT CCCTAAAGAT TGCTGGATTA CTTTGTAGT 1080
CGCCATAGAC TGGACGAAAT ATGGAAAAGA GGCCCAATACA ATTTTGAAAC 1130
CCGTAAGCT GGATGTGATG ATGACTTATA CCAAGAATAA GAAACCCAA 1180
AAAGCGCATA TCGTAAACCA GCAGGAATC CTGATCGGAC GTAACGATGA 1230
CGATGGCTAT TACTTCAAAT TTGGAATTTA CAGGTCGGT AACACCACGG 1280
TCCCGGTTAC TTATAACCTG AGCGGTACA GCGAACTGC CAGA.
1320

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3. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 encoding the amino acid sequence (Sequence No. 2) consisting essentially of:

Met Lys Lys Gln Ile Leu Tyr Leu Ile Val Leu Gln Gln Leu Phe

1

5

10

15

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Leu Cys Ser Ala Tyr Ala Gln Gln Lys Lys Ser Gly Asn Ile Pro		
20	25	30
Tyr Arg Val Asn Val Gln Ala Asp Ser Ala Lys Gln Lys Ala Ile		
35	40	45
Ile Asp Asn Lys Trp Val Ala Val Gly Ile Asn Lys Pro Tyr Ala		
50	55	60
Leu Gln Tyr Asp Asp Lys Leu Arg Phe Asn Gly Lys Pro Ser Tyr		
65	70	75
Arg Phe Glu Leu Lys Ala Glu Asp Asn Ser Leu Glu Gly Tyr Ala		
80	85	90
Ala Gly Glu Thr Lys Gly Arg Thr Glu Leu Ser Tyr Ser Tyr Ala		
95	100	105
Thr Thr Asn Asp Phe Lys Lys Phe Pro Ser Val Tyr Gln Asn		
110	115	120
Ala Gln Lys Leu Lys Thr Val Tyr His Tyr Gly Lys Gly Ile Cys		
125	130	135
Glu Gln Gly Ser Ser Arg Ser Tyr Thr Phe Ser Val Tyr Ile Pro		
140	145	150
Ser Ser Phe Pro Asp Asn Ala Thr Thr Ile Phe Ala Gln Trp His		
155	160	165
Gly Ala Pro Ser Arg Thr Leu Val Ala Thr Pro Glu Gly Glu Ile		
170	175	180
Lys Thr Leu Ser Ile Glu Glu Phe Leu Ala Leu Tyr Asp Arg Met		
185	190	195
Ile Phe Lys Lys Asn Ile Ala His Asp Lys Val Glu Lys Lys Asp		
200	205	210
Lys Asp Gly Lys Ile Thr Tyr Val Ala Gly Lys Pro Asn Gly Trp		
215	220	225
Lys Val Glu Gln Gly Gly Tyr Pro Thr Leu Ala Phe Gly Phe Ser		
230	235	240
Lys Gly Tyr Phe Tyr Ile Lys Ala Asn Ser Asp Arg Gln Trp Leu		
245	250	255
Thr Asp Lys Ala Asp Arg Asn Asn Ala Asn Pro Glu Asn Ser Glu		
260	265	270
Val Met Lys Pro Tyr Ser Ser Glu Tyr Lys Thr Ser Thr Ile Ala		
275	280	285

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Tyr	Lys	Met	Pro	Phe	Ala	Gln	Phe	Pro	Lys	Asp	Cys	Trp	Ile	Thr			
						290				295						300	
Phe	Asp	Val	Ala	Ile	Asp	Trp	Thr	Lys	Tyr	Gly	Lys	Glu	Ala	Asn			
						305				310						315	
Thr	Ile	Leu	Lys	Pro	Gly	Lys	Leu	Asp	Val	Met	Met	Thr	Tyr	Thr			
						320				325						330	
Lys	Asn	Lys	Lys	Pro	Gln	Lys	Ala	His	Ile	Val	Asn	Gln	Gln	Glu			
						335				340						345	
Ile	Leu	Ile	Gly	Arg	Asn	Asp	Asp	Asp	Gly	Tyr	Tyr	Phe	Lys	Phe			
						350				355						360	
Gly	Ile	Tyr	Arg	Val	Gly	Asn	Ser	Thr	Val	Pro	Val	Thr	Tyr	Asn			
						365				370						375	
Leu	Ser	Gly	Tyr	Ser	Glu	Thr	Ala	Arg.									
						380											

4. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 further comprising an expression vector.

5. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 further comprising a nucleic acid fragment encoding a signal peptide.

6. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 6 wherein the signal peptide is encoded by the nucleic acid (Sequence No. 1, base pairs 1 to 172, inclusive) consisting essentially of:

CCTTTTGGGA	GCAAAGGCAG	AACCATCTCC	GAACAAAGGC	AGAACCAGCC	50
TGTAAACAGA	CAGCAATTCA	TCCGCTTTCA	ACCAAAGTGA	AAGCATTTAA	100
TACAATACCA	GAATGTCGCA	TTTCCTTTTC	AGCGTACTTT	TGGGTAAAT	150
AACCAATAAA	AACTAAAGAC	GA.			180

7. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 6 wherein the signal peptide directs the transport of the protein from the cytoplasm to the periplasm.

8. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 wherein the nucleic acid molecule encodes a heparinase having binding heparin with a different affinity than the heparinase encoded by Sequence No. 1.

9. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 wherein the nucleic acid molecule encodes a heparinase having a specific activity different from the specific activity of the heparinase encoded by Sequence No. 1.

10. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 in a procaryotic cell other than *F. heparinum* which is capable of expressing the molecule.

11. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 11 in a procaryotic cell cultured under low sulfate conditions which is capable of expressing the molecule.

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FIG. 1

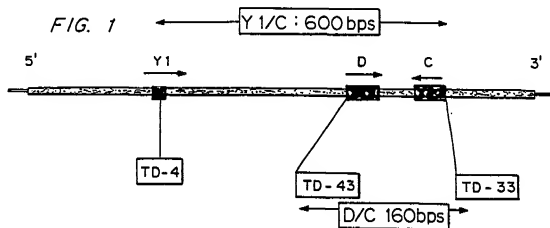
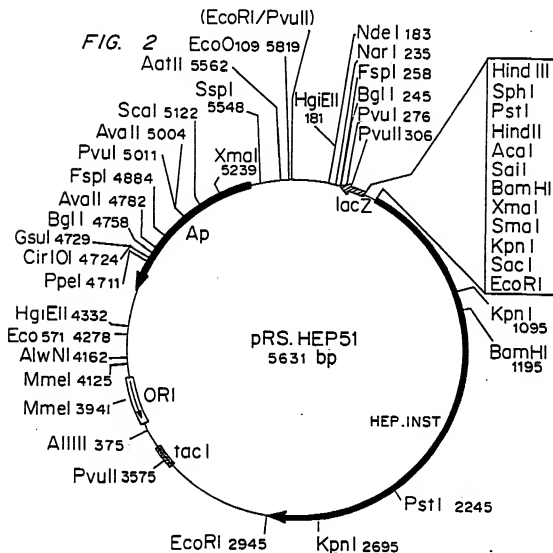


FIG. 2



SUBSTITUTE SHEET

FIG. 3

